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# *Our Lady's Schoolboy*

With his shoes slung over his shoulder to save precious leather, the small boy trudged two miles to school each morning and two miles home each night. A hardship? He did not consider it such, passing through the gardens, the vineyards, the orange and olive groves of the lovely plain of Venetia.

Yet it was not the crop of fruit but the crop of souls that occupied the dreams of Giuseppe. He wanted to become a priest. How could his penniless family pay for his education? How, in fact, could they do without the income that he, as the oldest, ought to be earning to help support his younger brother and sisters? His parents not know how they would manage without him; but they believed that if God was calling him He would also provide for the rest of them.

Many times, throughout his childhood, Giuseppe and his family made public and private pilgrimages to the Shrine of Our Lady of Cendrole, half a mile from their village of Riese. When the boy was fifteen, just out of grammar school, he and his father went there to pray that, if God willed, Giuseppe might be admitted, tuition-free, to a seminary.

The pastor—Giuseppe's friend, guide, and untiring tutor—applied to the patriarch of Venice for a scholarship for him, adding his personal testimony of the boy's intelligence, industry, and character. The Cardinal replied that this boy shall have a scholarshp if he could pass the entrance examinations of the Seminary of Padua.

He passes them with the mark of 'Eminent," and after a last visit to Our Lady of Cendrole leaves his village and family. His life's journey is to take him far. To the priesthood, the episcopate, and the post of Patriarch of Venice.

Always full of a deep Marian piety, he says a Mass at Our Lady of Health, on the Grand Canal, before leaving for the papal election of 1903. And just as would happen 55 years later, the Patriarch of Venice does not return to his See, for he is chosen as the Successor of Peter. And in between times another Pope of Mary declares this Giuseppe a Saint of God—St. Pius X.

*Australasian Voice of Fatima.*

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